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We're A Tobacco Free Zone



To protect the health of **everyone** at CDHD, no smoking or other tobacco use is permitted in our facilities or on our property, both indoors and out.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Produce Safety

Wash Your Fruits and Vegetables

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines, Americans should consume at least two servings of fruit and three servings of vegetables each day as part of a healthy diet. Researchers at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health have found that not enough Americans are meeting these minimum levels. Still, there was an encouraging trend of increased consumption of fruits and vegetables between 1988 and 2002. If this trend continues your controls in produce safety become more critical to protect the consumer.

Reported outbreaks linked to produce almost doubled between 1998 and 2004. The reasons for the increase in produce-related outbreaks can be attributed to many things, including increased surveillance efforts, and more consumers eating at salad bars. The increase in outbreaks may also be attributed to produce being processed at central sites then being shipped over large geographic areas, and increased globalization, both of which could increase human exposure to pathogens.

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Know the Code

Idaho Food Code 3-302.15 (A) Raw fruits and vegetables shall be thoroughly washed in water to remove soil and other contaminants before being cut, combined, with other ingredients, cooked, served, or offered human consumption in ready to eat form except as specified in (B) of this section and except that whole, raw fruits and vegetables that are intended for washing by the consumer before consumption need not be washed before they are sold.

(B) Fruits and vegetables may be washed by using chemicals as specified under section 7-204.12

Idaho Food Code section 7-204.12 Chemicals for Washing Fruits and Vegetables, Criteria. Chemicals used to wash or peel, whole fruits and vegetables shall meet the requirements specified in 21 CFR 173.315 Chemicals used in washing or to assist in the lye peeling of fruits and vegetables.



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Food Review is sent biannually, free of charge to all licensed food establishments in our health district. We hope to include news of interest and importance. Topic ideas or articles written by the readers are welcome to be sent to: Editor, Food Review, CDHD, 707 N. Armstrong Pl., Boise, ID 83704. Extra copies of the newsletter are available at your local Health Department office.

Produce Safety

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Minimize the Risk

1. Traceability is important. Have documentation that includes specifics on your vendors and suppliers.
2. Ordering strategies, menu development, standard operating procedures, monitoring and record keeping are controls that can minimize risk.
3. Clean and sanitize utensils and equipment. This includes shelving in walk-in coolers. The inside of the vendor's truck should be clean and cold.
4. Good employee hygiene is as important for produce as it is for other foods. Employees must understand that fresh produce can be a catalyst for foodborne illness. Hand washing is the first step.
5. Train employees by helping them understand where and how produce may be contaminated.



Produce of Concern

Cut Melons

Choose melons with no visible sign of decay or damaged rinds, and are free of excess soil. Scrub and wash the surface with clean tap water before cutting it. Wash the melon with water that is 10° F warmer than the melon itself. This will reduce water drawing back into the fruit that may carry contamination from the surface. Store cut melon at 41° F or below. Use or serve the melon within 7 days and don't forget to date mark.

Cut Leafy Greens

Iceberg lettuce, butter lettuce, escarole, endive, spinach, romaine, leaf lettuce, baby leaf lettuce, spring mix, cabbage, kale, arugula, and chard, cilantro and parsley need to be examined for decay and damaged leaves. Discard damaged leaves. If prewashed then washing a second time is not necessary. Cut leafy greens that are not pre-washed need to be thoroughly washed with clean water and clean in between the leaf layers. Store cut leafy greens at 41° F or below to prevent bacterial growth.

Sprouts

Sprouts can be more of a concern for people with immune compromised systems and older adults. Young children should not eat sprouts because their immune system is still developing. These individuals are considered highly susceptible to illness. Read the label on the sprouts to determine if they must be washed. Store sprouts at 41°F or below. Pathogenic bacteria may be in the seed. The FDA recommends that people not eat sprouts.

Cut Tomatoes

Tomatoes with excessive soil or skin damage should not be used. Wash tomatoes in clean water that is 10° F warmer to reduce water drawing to the inside. Refrigerate cut tomatoes at 41° F or below and date mark them for use within 7 days. You should cool tomatoes before you cut them.



Source: Nutrition and Food Service Edge, June 2012

Date-Marking and *Listeria monocytogenes*

Cheese

Date-marking all cheeses is no longer required. The new guidelines are based on the presence of several factors that may control the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*. These factors include organic acids, preservatives, competing microorganisms, pH, water activity or salt concentration. The results of risk factor studies now offer the exemption of the following cheeses for date-marking (listed at right).

Deli Salads

Deli salads e.g. ham salad, chicken salad, egg salad, seafood salad, pasta and potato salad have also undergone risk assessments as a potentially hazardous food and although there are risk factors such as temperature abuse that would contribute to the growth of bacteria, date-marking of deli salads prepared and packaged in a food processing plant is no longer required. Deli salads prepared in a food processing facility have added components, rendering a longer shelf life beyond 7 days. Preservatives such as sorbate and benzoate which inhibits the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes* are added during preparation of these salads. However, date-marking for salads prepared on-site of a food establishment are still required to use a 7-day use by date with the date of preparation included as day one.



Cultured Dairy Products

Cultured dairy products include yogurt, sour cream and buttermilk. Many of these products often have a low pH and are manufactured with lactic acid fermentation. The drop in pH that occurs as lactic acid is produced by the bacteria is beneficial in the preservation of food. The low pH environment prolongs the shelf life of foods and provides a barrier from contamination by bacteria that are common in the kitchen (e.g., *Escherichia coli*, or bacteria that are able to grow at refrigeration temperatures e.g., *Listeria*). The drop in the oxygen level during lactic acid fermentation is also an inhibitory factor for potential food pathogens. It is important to remember to maintain cold holding temperatures at or below 41° F as this is a critical factor in maintaining both the safety and quality of the food.



Hard Cheeses	Soft Cheeses
Asadero	Asiago soft
Abertam	Battelmatt
Appenzeller	Bellelay (blue-veined)
Asiago medium or old	Blue
Bra	Brick
Cheddar	Camosum
Christalinna	Chantelle
Colby	Edam
Cotija Anejo	Fontina
Cotija	Gorgonzola (blue-veined)
Coon	Gouda
Derby	Havarti
Emmentaler	Konigskase
English Dairy	Limburger
Gex (blue veined)	Milano
Gloucester	Manchego
Gjetost	Monterey
Gruyere	Muenster
Herve	Oka
Lapland	Port du Salut
Lorraine	Provolone
Oaxaca	Queso de Bola
Parmesan	Queso da la Tierra
Pecorino	Robbiole
Queso Anejo	Roquefort (blue-veined)
Queso Chihuahua	Samsoe
Queso de Prensa	Tilsiter
Romanello	Trappist
Romano	
Reggiano	
Sapsago	
Sassenage (blue-veined)	
Stilton	
Swiss	
Tignard (blue-veined)	
Vize	
Wensleydale (blue-veined)	

Cheeses not on this list still need to be date-marked.



Produce Safety Information Cards

Central District Health has information cards on hand that can be given to your customers at a Farmers Market or the produce department in a grocery store. If you are interested in offering your customers free information cards about proper washing and handling of produce, contact the health department at 208-327-7499. Please drop by and pick some up for your customers.

Safe Handling of Raw Produce



Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. As you enjoy fresh produce it's important to handle these products safely to reduce the risks of foodborne illness.

STORAGE

To maintain quality of fresh produce:

- Keep perishable fruits and vegetables, (like strawberries, lettuce, herbs and mushrooms) in a clean refrigerator at 40° or below.
- All produce that is pre-cut or peeled should be refrigerated to maintain quality and safety.

PREPARATION

Begin with clean hands. Wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap before and after preparing fresh produce.

- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Thoroughly wash all produce before eating. This includes home grown and organically grown produce.

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Vacuum Packaged Food and Botulism

Vacuum packaging of food must be approved by the health department because in certain foods, *Clostridium botulinum* and *Listeria monocytogenes* can grow. Both of these organisms can cause illness and death. Approval is required before the food is sold to a consumer. Vacuum packaging food creates a reduced oxygen environment that is favorable for *C. botulinum* growth.

Depending on the type of food, a variance and hazard analysis and critical control point plan are required.

The barriers to the growth of harmful organisms must be identified in detail to assure the food vacuum packaged is safe. The Idaho Food Code section 3-502.12 describes the requirements for vacuum packaging food to reduce the risk of food-borne illness.

Reduced oxygen packaging means the amount of oxygen reduced by removing oxygen and replacing it with another gas or combination of gases; or otherwise controlling the oxygen content to a level below the 21 percent oxygen level ordinarily found in the atmosphere.

Reduced oxygen packaging includes:

Vacuum packaging – Air is removed from a package of food and the package is hermetically sealed so that vacuum remains inside the package.

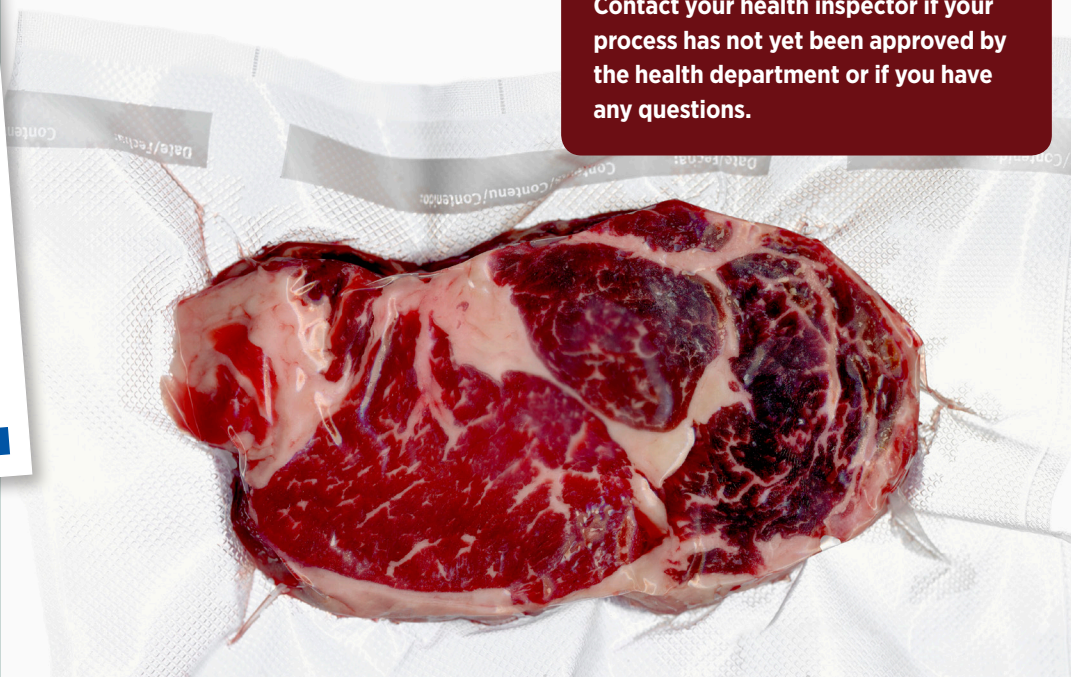
Modified atmospheric packaging –

Atmosphere of the package of food is modified so that its composition is different from air, but the atmosphere may change over time due to the permeability of the packaging material or the respiration of the food. Modified atmospheric packaging includes: reduction in the proportion of oxygen, total replacement of oxygen, or an increase in the proportion of other gases such as carbon dioxide or nitrogen.

Controlled atmospheric packaging –

Atmosphere of a package of food is modified so that until the package is open, its composition is different from air, and continuous control of the atmosphere is maintained, such as by using oxygen scavengers or a combination of total replacement of oxygen, non-respiring food, and impermeable packaging material.

Contact your health inspector if your process has not yet been approved by the health department or if you have any questions.





The Challenge of Summer for Temporary and Mobile Food Service

Summer is here and there are hundreds of special events for people to enjoy. One of the reasons people love these outdoor activities so much is food.

The food service that you provide plays a big part in everyone's experience at a special event. Please take this responsibility seriously. A mobile food vendor or temporary food establishment must be organized and know the potential hazards that must be controlled to prevent foodborne illness.

Employee Training

Training employees to understand proper hygienic practices, proper cook temperatures, correct hot and cold holding temperatures, cross contamination prevention and proper cleaning and sanitizing will reduce the chance of a customer suffering from food poisoning. Employees must be trained to handle food the correct way and recognize when something is wrong. Ready-to-eat foods must be handled with tissue, clean gloves, or utensils and never touched with bare hands.

Cold Holding

Cold holding perishable foods can be a challenge on hot summer days. This requires a constant awareness and monitoring of product temperatures to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Adequate electricity must be available to keep refrigeration equipment running. Do you have a back-up plan in case a generator or power supply fails during an event?

Hygiene

Warm water for proper hand washing is crucial, along with plenty of soap and paper towels. A good supply is important, so your food service workers can easily wash their hands at the appropriate time. Plan to have enough water and supplies

to last the entire event. Food service managers must lead by example and demonstrate to their workers that hand washing is an important practice to reduce the risk of contaminating food. If a food service worker leaves the food service area, they must wash their hands when they return.

Cook Temperatures

Proper cooking temperatures and hot holding are only going to be known by monitoring cook temperatures and hot holding temperatures with an accurate probe thermometer.

Food Protection

Food protection is important at special events because the public can be very close to the food being served. Food must be protected from outside contamination and the customers themselves. The food needs to be covered or a sneeze guard should be installed to prevent contamination from consumers who may cough, sneeze or touch the food. Arrange your mobile or temporary kitchen to prevent consumers from having easy access to the food. Ask yourself: How is food going to be protected if a rain storm or dust storm develops? What about bugs?

Clean Equipment

Have extra utensils and be prepared to wash, rinse and sanitize food prep surfaces and equipment. Do not forget the sanitizer, because you will need it. Know the concentration of the sanitizer and bring your paper test strips.





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Food Safety Training at CDHD

CDHD offers three levels of food safety training, including two with professional certification. The certification classes require advance registration and payment. Call 208-327-7499 to register. Except for the Basic Food Safety class, which is available free online, the certification classes are held at CDHD, 707 N. Armstrong Place, Boise.

The eight-hour ServSafe® Manager Certification course is designed to provide food service managers with the knowledge necessary to meet state and national standards. Certification is valid for five years and is good nationwide. Cost: \$100. Class runs from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Course fee includes lunch.

ServSafe® classes:

- Wednesday August 22
- Wednesday September 19
- Wednesday October 24
- Wednesday November 14
- Wednesday December 12

The four-hour Idaho Food Safety & Sanitation Course provides an Idaho certification in food safety under the state's Food Protection Program. The certification is good for five years. Cost: \$33. Class runs from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Idaho Food Safety classes:

- Tuesday August 7
- Tuesday September 11
- Tuesday October 9
- Thursday November 15
- Thursday December 13

The Basic Food Safety video is a six-part video covering the basics of food safety. The video is designed for entry-level food service employees, but the information is useful for home kitchens as well. The Basic Food Safety video does not offer certification. Cost: FREE! Find the video on our website: <http://cdhd.idaho.gov/EH/food/train.htm>